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Annual Report of the Assistant Emergency Demonstration Agent for Aroostook County for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1918

J. H. Philbrick

Assistant Emergency Demonstration Agent

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ANNUAL REPORT

of the

ASSISTANT EMERGENCY DEMONSTRATION AGENT

for Aroostook County

For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1918.

J. H. Philbrick

Assistant Emergency Demonstration Agent

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

ASSISTANT EMERGENCY DEMONSTRATION AGENT

for ARCOSTOCK County

For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1918.

J. H. Philbrick

Asst. Emg. Dem. Agt.

Houlton, Me., June 30, 1918.

Leon S. Merrill, Director,
Agricultural Extension Service,
Orono, Me.

Dear Dr. Merrill:

I herewith submit my Annual Report
on Agricultural Extension Work in southern
Arcostock County, for the fiscal year ending
June 30, 1918.

Very truly yours,

J. H. Philbrick

Assistant Emergency Demonstration Agent

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GENERAL STATEMENT

October 9, 1918, I arrived in Houlton, having been appointed an Assistant Emergency Demonstration Agent under the Food Production Act of 1917. The County to be covered was South Aroostook, south of and including Westfield and Mars Hill, with the exception of Molunkus, Macwahoc and Reed Plantation on the Southern boundary which are included in No. Penobscot and including Patten and Mount Chase in Penobscot County.

The work has been along the lines of straight County Agent work, such as Extension Schools, Neighborhood Meetings, Demonstrations, etc., and as far as possible have continued the work started by Mr. Scribner during the summer of 1917.

The word county in this report unless otherwise designated will refer to the Southern part of Aroostook County as described before. There are two types of farming in the County which may be divided into two general classes.

1. Potato farming
2. General or mixed farming.

From Houlton due north we find the main potato section of the county included in seven towns. In these towns the raising of potatoes is the main business of 90 per cent of the farmers, while comparatively few cows, hogs, or hens are kept above enough to supply the family.

General or mixed farming will include all other farming in the county, although as the following map will indicate many potatoes are raised in certain sections. The farming for the most part will include either potato raising or lumbering and mixed farming as carried on in some of the other counties.

There are two types which have a bearing on this division:

1. The type of soil.
2. The distance from market.

Nearly every farmer in the potato section is within six miles or less of the railroad. These farms are free from rocks, well drained and can be worked early in the spring, making them worth more for the raising of potatoes than any other crop.

While the soil in the southern part differs from that of the north in that it is not as early and more broken up, the determining factor in many cases is the distance from market.

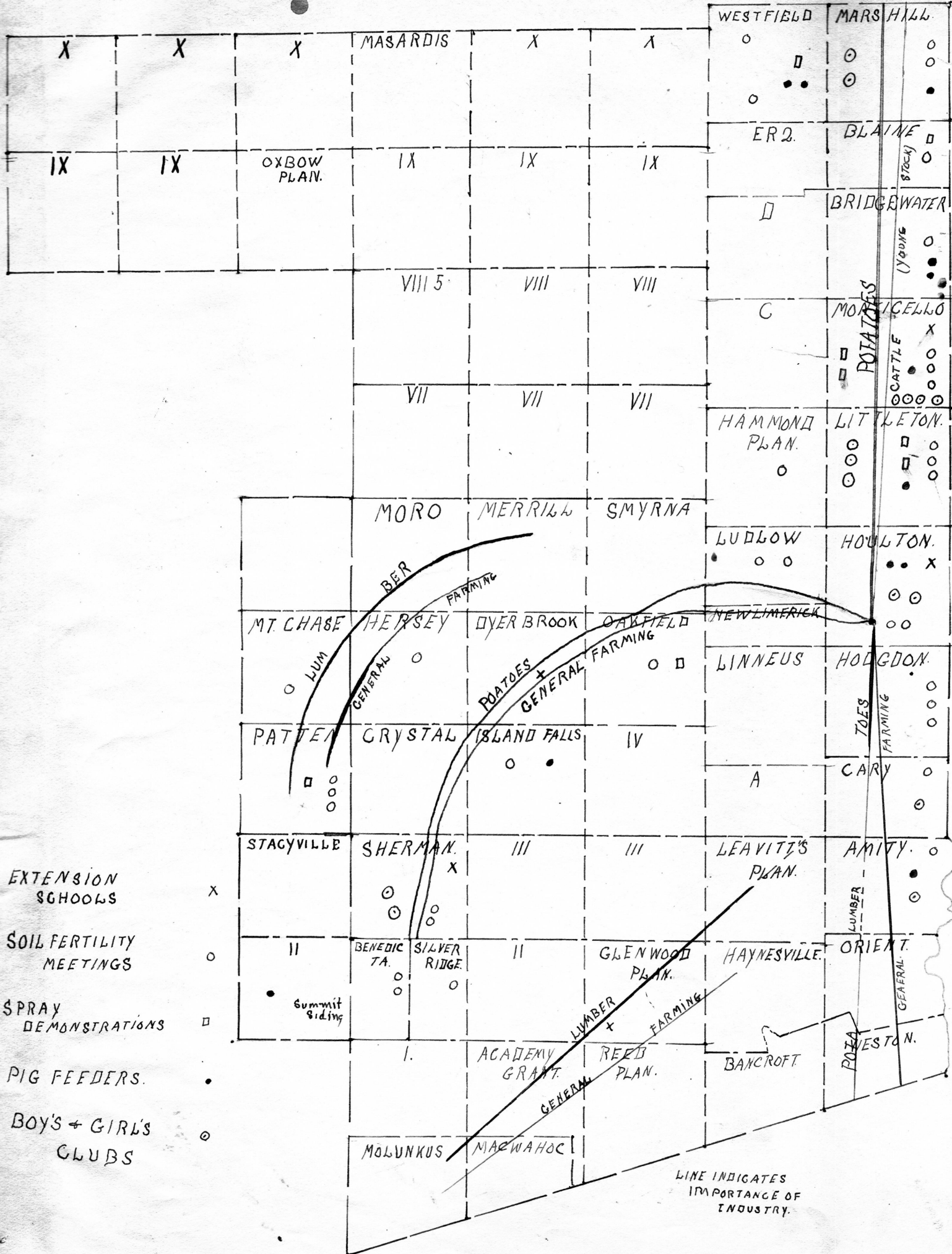
As you go south from Houlton the acreage of potatoes decreases in an even proportion to the distance from Houlton. Many of these farmers raise what potatoes they can haul to market and keep a few cows, pigs and sheep. In some of these towns lumbering takes the place of potatoes, many of the farmers working in the woods from four to eight months, raising only enough produce to support their families.

The types of Extension work may be divided into the same divisions as the farming, although they overlap in many cases. Naturally the men in the potato section are interested in fertilizer, seed selection, spray mixing, and the application of spray material. In the southern section the work is more mixed. In one community if it happens to be near the railroad we may find quite an acreage of potatoes while within ten miles we may find a lumbering town or a small dairy section. For this reason one may find within twenty miles an ideal section for practically every phase of Extension work.

In nearly every town in the county is an active Grange which is always ready and willing to assist in any way with Extension Work. This is particularly true of Club Work, as some of the Granges have bought grain for pig clubs and raised money to be given as prizes.

Thru the Extension Department and the cooperation of the Granges and the farmers, the State specialists have been employed and have helped as far as possible.

The following map will help explain the Agricultural situation of the County and the type of work being carried on.



EXTENSION SCHOOLS

Three schools were held in this county and three in No. Aroostook. The first one was held in Houlton January 28, 29 and 30. This was a Dairy Feeding school and was poorly attended. This brought out two facts very clearly: first, that while there are many cows kept in and around Houlton it is not a dairy section, and second, that the farmers in general are skeptical about Extension work for the reason that they do not understand it clearly.

The Soil Fertility Schools held at Sherman Mills and Monticello were well attended and the farmers were interested, especially at Monticello. I think that this is the best school for Aroostook County, but that it might be changed some to better suit the conditions in this section.

Table 1. - Extension Schools.

Aroostook County.

Kind	Town	No. Ses.	No. reg.	Attendance	
				Total	Average
Dairy	Houlton	4	29	31	7.8
Soil Fertility	Caribou	6	22	71	11.8
"	" Easton	6	71	207	34.5
"	" Monticello	6	68	166	27.7
"	" Sherman Mills	4	65	108	27.0
"	" Washburn	6	81	172	28.7
Six Schools		32	336	755	23.6

I was leader of the schools in Houlton, Sherman Mills, and Monticello. Mr. Scribner was leader of the Schools at Caribou, Easton and Washburn.

CAMPAIGNS

Kinds of Campaigns

Soil Fertility

Good Seed

Hog Feeding

Farm Account Books

Soil Fertility Campaign.

The purpose of this campaign is outlined on the following page. No circular letters or posters were used in this campaign. Several short press notices were sent out stating briefly the purpose of the campaign. In this campaign thirty-four meetings were held in twenty towns with a total attendance of 412. Several other meetings were scheduled, but owing to the condition of the roads and weather could not be held when scheduled, and in some cases it was impossible to hold them after the regular schedule was completed.

While the immediate results from this campaign have not been very great, I think it did a great deal in giving Extension Work a start in the County. It gave the county agent an opportunity to get acquainted with many of the farmers and the existing conditions, and also gave the farmers an idea as to what Extension Work is.

Soil Fertility Campaign

Location: Aroostook County

Purpose: To teach a method of interpreting the figures on a fertilizer bag or barrel; to teach farmers the fertilizing value of clover, straw, hay, manure, etc.; to teach the value of proper conservation of manure.

Period of Time Covered: October 1 to _____

Cooperation:

- (1) The County Agent
- (2) Interested farmers
- (3) Assistant from the Extension Staff

Plan of Attack:

I. General Plan.

The County will be divided into communities. Some person's interest will be aroused in each community and a meeting with this person as a nucleus will be held. At this time the problems will be discussed. At the first meetings the County Agent will be assisted by some other member of the Extension Staff.

II. What the County Agent Will Do.

- (1) Locate through personal interviews a man in each community to call a meeting of interested farmers.
- (2) Be present at this meeting and with the aid of a blackboard assist each farmer present to figure the formulae of typical fertilizers, compute the value of humus plowed under, and compute the losses in manure.

III. What the Farmers Will Do.

- (1) Arrange for the community meeting.

IV. Measure of Results:

- (1) The number of farmers present at each meeting who learn to figure the values mentioned above.

Table 2.

Meetings held in Soil Fertility Campaign.

<u>Towns</u>	<u>No. Meetings</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Hodgdon	3	48
Amity	1	5
Littleton	3	38
Cary	1	7
Houlton	2	26
Sherman	2	15
Silver Ridge	1	4
Benedicta	2	20
Westfield	2	16
Mars Hill	2	28
Patten	3	26
Mt. Chase	1	3
Hersey	1	13
Ludlow	2	29
Hammond Plantation	1	12
Island Falls	1	6
Oakfield	1	7
Monticello	3	47
Bridgewater	1	27
Robinson	1	35
Towns - 20	34	412

Average Attendance 12.1

Good Seed Campaign.

Good seed was scarce in the county last spring, and naturally the demand was good. This campaign was run nearly entirely in conjunction with the Soil Fertility Campaign, much of the seed being listed at these meetings. The apparent shortage caused farmers to hold their seed until late this spring and at this time all the surplus was spoken for by neighbors or relatives. For this reason the County Agent has known of quite a lot of seed which was for sale, although but very little has passed thru his hands to the consumer for the reason mentioned above.

Many bushels of western oats and wheat have been sown this spring.

The plan of campaign follows.

Good Seed Campaign

Location: Aroostook County

Purpose: To locate the supply of seed grains; to locate farmers who wish to purchase seed; to place these two classes of farmers in touch with each other; to locate prospective comparative demonstrators and in this way establish a good seed center in every community.

Period of Time Covered: October 1 to planting time.

Cooperation:

- (1) The County Agent
- (2) Interested farmers
- (3) Selectmen and other public officials
- (4) Granges and other organizations.

Plan of Attack:

- I. **General Plan.** The County will be divided into communities. Some person's interest in each community will be aroused. Thru this person cards will be distributed and persons located who have seed for sale and who need seed. This work will be followed up by visits, etc.
- II. **What the County Agent Will Do**
 - (1) Interview individuals and talk at meetings concerning the campaigns.
 - (2) Furnish the necessary cards for the cooperators.
 - (3) Furnish the cooperators with a list of seed for sale
 - (4) Attempt to locate one or more men in each community who will act as comparative demonstrators and serve as centers for good seed.
- III. **What the Cooperators Will Do.**
 - (1) Fill out the survey blanks and encourage neighbors to do the same.
- IV. **What the Selectmen and Other Public Officials Will Do.**
 - (1) Assist in defining community limits.

- (2) Furnish County Agent with list of names of possible cooperators in each community.

Measure of Results:

- (1) Number of farmers selling seed will be ascertained by inquiry and personal calls.
- (2) Number of farmers purchasing seed and number of acres planted with purchased seed will be ascertained by personal calls and a follow-up letter.
- (3) Number of comparative demonstrators secured.

Hog Feeding Campaign.

The idea of the self feeder was explained at all of the soil fertility meetings and many blue prints were given out.

Many of the farmers who intended to build self feeders either lost all of their pigs or their sows did not farrow at all. This trouble has been quite general this spring, one man losing over \$400.00 worth of sows and pigs. In every case where the feeders are in use the farmers are satisfied with the results so far, although it is too early to get any definite results. George Irving of Westfield saw a feeder at his neighbors across the road and wanted one built. He has fifteen pigs on self feeders at the present time. Louis Porter of Houlton has built one for two pigs after seeing his brother's.

Ira J. Porter fed eight pigs on a feeder last winter at a profit of \$13.40 per pig, and is running ten on feeder this summer.

Henry Rideout says: "I have hard work to make some of the farmers believe that these are spring pigs."

The Plan of Campaign follows.

Hog Feeding Campaign

"Pigs for Profit"

Location: Aroostook County

Purpose: To introduce the most profitable method of feeding hogs.

Period of Time Covered: October 1, _____

Cooperation:

- (1) The County Agent
- (2) Interested Farmers
- (3) Selectmen and other interested officials
- (4) Granges and other organizations.

Plan of Attack:

I. General Plan:

A survey to ascertain the number of brood sows in the county will be made to assist farmers in securing pigs.

At various meetings and thru personal interviews arrangements will be made for cooperators and Extension Service feeders will be constructed in as many communities as possible.

II. What the County Agent Will Do.

- (1) Secure a list of persons having brood sows and pigs.
- (2) Put this information in the hands of persons wishing it.
- (3) Present the subject at meetings.
- (4) Hold as many building demonstrations as possible in different communities.
- (5) Furnish the necessary blanks for keeping a cost of feed.
- (6) Furnish the swine management directions.

III. What the Cooperators Will Do.

- (1) Assist in survey
- (2) Arrange for neighborhood meetings.
- (3) Keep an account of cost of pigs, cost and amount of feed used, and receipts from sale.
- (4) Furnish the County Agent with this information which will be kept confidential.
- (5) Furnish the County Agent with the cost of construction of feeder.
- (6) Keep a record of Spread of Influence and give to County Agent.

IV. Measure of Results.

- (1) Number of cooperators.
- (2) Profit made by feeders
- (3) Spread of Influence..

Table 3.

Hog Feeders.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>No. Pigs.</u>
Henry Rideout	Houlton	4
Ira J. Porter	Houlton	10
Louis Porter	Houlton	2
Chas. Porter	Littleton	4
John Lowry	Monticello	3
H. A. Gentle	Monticello	2
Joe Smith	Bridgewater	1
Harry Good	Bridgewater	27 (Just sold out)
Walter Tweedie	Westfield	6
George Irving	Westfield	15
D. M. Libby	Amity	3
Chas. McKenzie	Island Falls	5
Summit Lumber Co.	Davidson	9
Total - 13	8	<hr/> 64

Farm Account Book

Campaign

The Farm Account Books and the method of keeping accounts was described at every Soil Fertility meeting and the most of them given out at that time. In several cases farmers have taken books who did not intend to keep them, although we tried to weed such ones out. In a few other cases circumstances have arisen which prevented the keeping of the account.

Every farmer having an account book has been called on one or more times since receiving the book. Practically every farmer agrees that it is a good idea and many are keeping their books in fine shape. The end of the year will tell the story.

Table 4.

Farm Account Books

Towns	No. Account Books Given Out	No. In Use	No. Returned
Benedicta	3	3	
Bridgewater	8	4	1
Houlton	15	9	1
Hodgdon	2	1	
Island Falls	7	4	2
Ludlow	4	4	
Littleton	1	1	
Monticello	13	7	2
Mars Hill	5	3	1
Oakfield	3	2	1
Patten	12	4	1
Robinson	5	2	
Westfield	7	6	
Total - 13	85	50	9

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Three "Dairy Meetings" were held during the winter with the help of Mr. E. W. Morton. These meetings were only fairly well represented by the farmers as it is hard work to find a community where many farmers make a business of dairying.

Many are interested in beef and while this county will probably never be noted for its beef I think much more can be produced at a profit in connection with the raising of potatoes. Many farmers are talking beef, and should the potato crop turn out good this fall I think several farmers will be in the market for a pure-bred bull of one of the beef types.

At the present time there are very few good beef bulls in the county. It is a common practice to buy up young stock in the fall across the line in Canada to winter, but as these steers are of no particular breed the results are not very satisfactory.

Table 10.

Dairy Meetings.

<u>Town</u>	<u>No. Meetings</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Littleton	1	17
Mars Hill	1	5
Sherman Mills	1	27
Patten	1	7
Total - 4.	4	56

Average Attendance 14

MISCELLANEOUS DAILY ACTIVITIES.

Table 5.

A. Official Calls.

On Demonstrators	43
On Other Farmers	445
On Other Persons	181
Persons calling on Ext. Rep.	49
	<hr/>
Total Calls	718

Table 6.

B. Persons Advised.

Persons advised on the farm	194
Persons advised away from the farm	114
Persons advised by mail	70
Persons advised by phone	80
	<hr/>
Total No. Persons Advised	458

Table 7.

C. Meetings Attended.

<u>Kind</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
At Demonstrations		
Other meetings in re- lation to Projects	57	1450
Misscellaneous	2	35
Totals	<hr/> 59	<hr/> 1485

MISCELLANEOUS DAILY ACTIVITIES (2)

Table 8.

<u>D. Publicity.</u>	<u>No.</u>
Circular letters written	9
Circular letters mailed	124
News articles written	10
Bulletins and circulars distributed	245

Table 9.

E. Miles Traveled on Official Business.

By Motor Vehicle	3018
By Team	453
By other means	<u>2226</u>
Total Miles	5697

Table 10.

F. Division of Labor.

Days in Office	74 $\frac{1}{2}$
Days in Field	143
Days Annual Leave	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
Leave without pay	3 $\frac{3}{4}$
Days Sick-leave	4
Total	<u>229</u>

SPREAD OF INFLUENCE.

The only campaigns that are finished are the Soil Fertility and the Good Seed.

I do not know of a single instance where a man has built a manure pit or concrete gutters as a result of the talks on the better care of manure. Finances and labor may have something to do with this.

While I cannot give any concrete examples, I feel certain that the talks on the composition and analysis of fertilizer did some good. There was considerable feeling of various kinds this past fall concerning fertilizer, and anything that was said concerning fertilizer found ready listeners. Men at every meeting admitted that they had not understood this or that part of the analysis or the source of the ingredients, etc.

The farmers as a whole have a very friendly attitude toward demonstration work and extension work in general. Most of them are willing to learn and if you can show them by demonstration that you have something better they are willing to try it. One or two men said concerning spraying demonstration "It will do no harm, and if it is any better we want it." I have not found ten farmers during the year that were not friendly. If I could not interest them in some project or help them in any way, I was just as welcome to stay to dinner.

The majority of the farmers in the county knew practically nothing of Extension Work before a county Agent was sent into the county. At the present time the agent may call on a man in the interest of spraying, and he will think that the agent's business is just spraying; or another farmer may think that it is just pig feeders, while possibly both men wanted information on both spraying and pig feeders. Naturally as the farmers become better acquainted with the purpose of Extension Work, they will make greater demand upon it.

While there are not many examples of the Spread of Influence along any one line of work, I feel that the farmers are much better acquainted with Extension Work, and calls are coming in nearly every day for assistance.

WORK UNDERWAY.

The following lines of work have been completed:

Soil Fertility Campaign

Good Seed Campaign

Work Underway (2)

The needs of the county fall under two heads: potatoes and general. The greatest field for work is in the production of potatoes. While it is a comparatively long job to produce it, there is an urgent need for better seed and in many cases farmers are willing to cooperate with the agent. As many demonstrations as can be handled in hill selection can and will be scheduled for this fall. Several are already signed up.

Another important phase is the mixing and application of spray material. There is chance for great improvement along this line and farmers admit as much. Nine spraying demonstrations are under way, and already one other farmer has asked me to spray his whole piece.

Mr. Scribner held a number of spray-mixing demonstrations in the county last summer and three mixing demonstrations are scheduled and many more will be held during the summer. The farmers are very interested in these and agree that they are a great help.

Under general needs perhaps the greatest is for more pigs in the whole county. There has been a great demand for pigs this spring, and it looks now as if the demand will be very good this fall. Many farmers have disposed of all their brood sows while most farmers are only keeping one or two pigs. There is tendency in the county to save labor as much as possible, and pig feeders are meeting with approval for this reason if for no other. Since starting this report Hoovey & Hussey of Mars Hill have asked for a feeder for fifteen pigs. They are feeding fifteen on a feeder on one of their farms now.

There is a great need in the county for better stock and better methods of feeding. A great many farmers buy up young stock of every breed and description in the fall and sell it for beef in the following fall. At least fifty percent of this is inferior beef. A few good beef bulls would improve the "young stock" a great deal at very small expense. At the present time good bulls seem to be more plentiful than the money to buy with.

Comparative Demonstrations.

Due to the fact that the greater part of the seed oats available at the Arcostock Farm were booked as soon as they were placed on the market only one comparative Oat Demonstration is being run this year. At the present time they are looking good.

Eight Spraying Demonstrations are under way. These will prove very valuable as nearly every farmer is spraying to some extent and anything that can be seen is worth much more than a statement of the facts.

Comparative Demonstrations (2).

There is a large field for Extension Work along potato lines, and while these demonstrations will interest and benefit farmers alonging spraying lines, they will also pave the way for further work in improving the potato yield.

Much work can be done in getting farmers to use better seed, seed selection and spraying.

Table 11.

Kind of Comparative Demonstrations.

<u>Kind</u>	<u>Number</u>
Oat	1
Spraying	8
Hill selected seed	1

Table 12.

List of Comparative Demonstrators by Towns.

<u>Name of Demonstrator</u>	<u>Post Office</u>	<u>Kind of Demonstration</u>	<u>Area in Acres</u>
Boyd Harrington	Patten	Spraying (Potatoes)	1
Paul Nadeau	Oakfield	"	1
H. A. Gentle	Houlton (Littleton)	"	1
E. M. Libby	"	"	1
E. C. Wellington	Monticello	"	1
John Lowry	"	"	1
Walter Tweedie	Westfield	"	1
Don Sanborn	Robinson	"	1
Chas. Porter	Littleton	Oats (340)	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pearl Bubar	Monticello	Hill selected seed (1917)	1 row 12 rods.

While these demonstrations have just started every farmer is interested, and I think that if the demonstration plot comes out in the lead that the farmers will abide by the decision.

Table 13.

Tests.

Town	Kinds	Number
Littleton	Lime	2
Littleton	Iron Sulphate on kale	1

The lime in these two tests was applied this spring to grain ground and harrowed in and a very little applied to grass ground as an experiment. Many farmers are very interested in lime and are watching these tests closely. Sorrel is very thick this spring, and the indications are that much more lime than ever before will be bought this coming spring.

Very few farmers have used lime previously to any extent. Every farmer in the county that I know of that has used lime the past year or two will use more lime this next spring.

D. M. Libby of Amity used a ton of lime on one acre, and will get three times as much hay on this ~~acse~~ as on the other acres in the same piece. Mr. Libby said this spring: "I will not seed down another rod of ground until it is limed."

The spray test with Iron Sulphate on kale was satisfactory. The spraying was delayed two days as we had to wait for the Sulphate to be shipped from Bangor. There is a bunch of mustard and kale in the county and many are interested in using Iron Sulphate, but are skeptical as many have not sprayed early enough, and consequently did not get the best results.

Boys' and Girls' Clubs.

There have been twelve clubs formed in the County this Spring. Some of these have been organized by the county agent and in others the Emergency Club Leader has assisted. He has been a great help and his work will mean much to the clubs. There is work enough for one man to do with the clubs practically all the time after they are formed and I think that such a man as Mr. Charles Porter could be employed profitably at least during six months.

We have tried to push pig clubs, but have been handicapped by the lack of early pigs. Many who could not get pigs have gone into the garden club.

Table 14.

Boys' and Girls' Agricultural Clubs.

<u>Town</u>	<u>No. Clubs</u>	<u>No. Members</u>
Houlton	1	10
Amitv	1	12
Cary	1	12
Sherman Mills	3	57
Littleton	2	47
Monticello	3	29
Mars Hill	1	35
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	12	202